

St Luke's Church of England Primary School

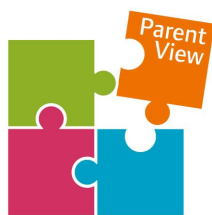
Inspection report

Unique reference number	100954
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	395400
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2012
Lead inspector	John Worgan

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Farey
Headteacher	Glenda Higgins
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 January 2008
School address	Saunders Ness Road Poplar London E14 9EB
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	21–22 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Worgan	Additional inspector
Pervina Saunders	Additional inspector
Peter Dannheisser	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons or parts of lessons, taught by 10 teachers. They also observed a range of intervention sessions and sessions on phonics (the sounds that letters make), listened to pupils reading and looked at their work. Discussions were held with groups of pupils, parents and carers, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation documents and action plan, pupils' progress records and safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires returned by 95 parents and carers were received and analysed, along with those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those supported by school action plus, is above average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above that found in most schools. The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language are well above the national average. The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

A building programme has started which will see the school expand from one to two forms of entry, with consequent increases in staff and extended facilities. The school has a Nursery and Reception unit for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Breakfast- and after-school clubs are managed by the governing body.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- St Luke's is a good school where pupils achieve well. Pupils feel happy, are safe and enjoy learning. It is not yet outstanding because weaknesses remain in pupils' writing and pupils are not always provided with work that is challenging enough, particularly for the most able.
- Pupils make good progress from starting points that are usually well below those typically expected. The school's tracking data indicate that current progress in Year 6 is considerably better than in the previous year, when the performance of the most-able pupils dipped, and inspection evidence shows that current attainment is broadly average.
- Teaching is good. Most lessons seen were good or outstanding. Strategies introduced by the school to improve teaching have had a significant impact on pupils' progress. Senior managers and subject leaders play a key role in improving teaching and learning. However, teachers do not always correct errors in pupils' writing and on occasions teaching lacks enough challenge.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and considerate and have positive attitudes to learning. Older pupils take on responsibility willingly. There are few instances of bullying of any kind. Behaviour seen was of a high standard and school logs show that this is typical. Pupils feel safe and the curriculum ensures that they have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Leadership and management are good. The management structure is being further strengthened as the school expands in size. Self-evaluation and improvement planning are focused on raising attainment. The curriculum provides a wide range of enrichment activities and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Subject leaders are clear about what needs to improve and support staff in raising achievement. Teachers' performance is managed well and professional development focuses on improving teaching.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Challenge all pupils, especially the most able, so that more teaching is outstanding, by:
 - ensuring that opportunities for cooperative learning are provided and tasks matched to their needs
 - planning lessons that provide the more able with opportunities and time to attempt higher level tasks.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by:
 - giving them opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum
 - marking work carefully so that they are aware of errors in spelling and punctuation and are helped to correct them.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are generally well below those expected for their ages. They make good progress, especially in personal and social development. Children's learning experiences are varied and enriched to provide them with the skills to reach the early learning goals. Adults support the children's learning well, engaging children in thoughtful talk about their activities and stimulating thinking through good questioning. Children cooperate well and behaviour is good.

At Key Stage 1, progress is good and data show that this has been consistently so over time. There has been a clear improvement in achievement in literacy over this time; inspectors saw evidence of good progress in pupils' literacy work, especially in Year 2, where pupils' writing in a range of contexts is encouraged. A slight dip in performance in mathematics in the last year is being successfully addressed through strategies to improve teaching, led by the subject leader.

In the national tests in 2011 for Year 6, the attainment of the most-able pupils slightly dipped below the high standard of previous years. The school's data for the current Year 6 indicate that there has been significant improvement in both English and mathematics and attainment is at an average level. This judgement was confirmed by lesson observations, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their work. Pupils in Year 6 appreciate the support and encouragement they have been given which has led to improved progress and has made them confident about moving to the next stage of their education. Good learning was seen in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 on formulae: pupils enjoyed a starter activity of multiplication and division 'tennis'; they then went on to work in pairs, conducting an investigation; the most-able pupils produced a formula to solve the problem independently, while others

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tackled the same problem using plastic tiles.

Attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and securely average when pupils leave the school in Year 6. In a phonics lesson in the Reception class, achievement was good because of good teaching and well-targeted support for weaker readers.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making comparable progress to other pupils in the school. This is because careful tracking of their progress enables support to be targeted so that their needs are met. This also applies to other groups, including pupils who speak English as an additional language; they are making good progress, as are all minority ethnic groups in the school and pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good. A view echoed by parents and carers. As one parent said: 'The teachers' different strategies and abilities are an asset to the school and complement each other to meet the needs of the pupils.' In outstanding lessons seen, pupils were inspired and challenged by tasks which were adapted to their needs and abilities. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils were inspired to write a report about an imaginary fire at the House of Commons by the teacher taking the role of a doctor at a nearby hospital, whom the pupils then interviewed. In successful lessons, pupils work together in pairs and groups and are actively involved in their learning; consequently, they make at least good progress. In these lessons, teachers' good questioning skills promote learning well. In the small number of less successful lessons, opportunities for active and cooperative learning were limited. Activities were not always well matched to pupils' individual needs and progress slowed as a result. More-able pupils had fewer opportunities to tackle higher-level tasks and were not always given enough time to develop their skills. Overall, marking is thorough and good examples were seen of comments which pointed out the steps that pupils needed to take in order to improve. However, the correction of errors in spelling and punctuation is inconsistent and mistakes were often uncorrected. In addition, pupils are not always given enough opportunities to develop their skills in extended writing across the curriculum.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well taught and are consequently making good progress as are pupils from different minority ethnic heritages and those at an early stage of acquiring English. Pupils expressed confidence in the support that they receive and the intervention sessions observed were of high quality. Teaching assistants support pupils in class well while also encouraging pupils' independence.

Reading is well taught across the school. In a good guided reading session in the Reception class, pupils worked in three ability groups, each making good progress. They sounded out words and then incorporated them in sentences. Teachers are equally effective at capitalising on opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral,

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social and cultural development. The well-managed breakfast and after-school clubs provide a range of stimulating activities and opportunities for extending learning and pupils' social development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

St Luke's is a well-ordered community where excellent pastoral care and support help pupils develop and take responsibility for their own behaviour. The role model of good behaviour displayed by older pupils and their involvement in the care of younger children through the play leadership scheme are key factors in good personal development. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires agree that the school keeps their children safe and that behaviour is good. As one parent said, 'Teachers have worked hard to make my son feel secure. It is a safe and warm environment without being indulgent of bad behaviour.'

Pupils are made aware of how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum, which offers a wide range of activities, including units on internet safety, fire safety, cycling proficiency and bullying. Bullying of any kind is rare and pupils report that any incident is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based harassment, and recognise their role in preventing such incidents. In the majority of lessons inspectors saw good behaviour with occasional exceptions only when teaching was less engaging. In their questionnaires pupils said that there were few instances when lessons are interrupted by poor behaviour. The school's own behaviour records and discussions with pupils and parents and carers show that this is typical.

Pupils in their questionnaires said that they feel safe in school. In discussion they said that teachers deal with any incidents of inappropriate behaviour promptly and effectively. They said that staff are sympathetic and supportive when they have problems. Attendance is average and showing signs of consistent and sustained improvement over time, particularly as the school's effective steps to support pupils with poor attendance records have a greater and increasing impact.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers at all levels have a clear focus on raising achievement. The headteacher has a clear long-term vision for the development of the school which places the individual pupil at the centre; she, and other leaders, are determined to preserve this approach as the school expands. Subject leaders are keen and enthusiastic and lead initiatives which are improving the teaching of writing and mathematics. Some are new to the role and are participating in local authority-led leadership training which is improving their managerial skills. Overall, staff performance and teaching are led and managed effectively. Professional development is well planned, focusing on improving teaching and learning. Cooperation with local schools also ensures consistency in assessment and allows teachers to share good practice.

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The governing body has recently undergone changes which have brought in governors with key skills. Governors are fully involved in school self-evaluation, strategic planning and challenging the performance of the school. All at the school are committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination and pupils have a sense of belonging, fostered by the inclusive ethos. This was illustrated by one pupil during a discussion on racism who said: 'As long as you are a friend, you are a friend.' Robust arrangements for safeguarding ensure that pupils are safe and secure. Policies and procedures are clear and effective and the governing body ensures that they are implemented and monitored.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. All pupils in Key Stage 2 participate in lunchtime clubs and their participation is monitored to ensure that they undertake a balance of activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is promoted well through the curriculum and through high-quality assemblies, which are a strength of the school.

The school has a strong capacity to improve and this is clearly evidenced by improvements in teaching, achievement and the way in which any dips in performance are analysed, causes identified and effective action taken to remedy them.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 June 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Luke's Church of England Primary School, Tower Hamlets
E14 9EB**

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us on our recent visit to your school. We appreciated your politeness and good behaviour and we would like to thank you for helping us to find out about your school through questionnaires and discussions. St Luke's is a good school.

These are some of the things that stood out about your school:

- You take on responsibilities willingly; we were particularly impressed by the ways in which older pupils help younger ones.
- Your school is safe for all of you and staff care for you well and help you when you have problems or difficulties.
- You obviously enjoy learning and are given lots of exciting things to do. We were impressed by the standard of work, especially in Year 6, and by the range of clubs and activities available to you.
- You are well taught and make good progress. Your headteacher and the school leaders have worked well to improve the school.

We have asked your school to do a few things to improve further. These are to:

- help you to improve your writing skills by:
 - giving you opportunities for extended writing in all subjects
 - correcting your work carefully so that you are aware of mistakes in spelling and punctuation and are helped to correct them.
- give you challenging activities to do which are matched to your needs, giving some of you the opportunity and time to attempt higher-level tasks.

You can all help the school improve by challenging yourselves and always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

John Worgan
Lead inspector

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